

***Courtoisia cyperoides* (Roxb.) J. Sojak - The Correct Name for *Indocourtoisia cyperoides* (Roxb.) Bennet & Raizada**

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Abstract

Courtoisia cyperoides (Roxb.) J. Sojak is the correct name for *Indocourtoisia cyperoides* (Roxb.) Bennet & Raizada.

Raizada and Bennet (1981) published a new name, *Indocourtoisia* Bennet & Raizada for *Courtoisia* Nees belonging to the family *Cyperaceae*, when the latter was found to be a later homonym of *Courtoisia* Marchand, a Lichen genus. Some other names viz., *Courtoisia* J. Sojak (1979) and *Pseudomariscus* Rauchert (1982) were also proposed for this sedge genus. Among these new names proposed, *Courtoisia* Sojak (1979) should get priority as it is the earliest one. It may also be noted that Vorster (1986) proposed to conserve the name *Courtoisia* Nees against *Courtoisia* Marchand. But this proposal was not accepted at the nomenclatural sessions during the 14th International Botanical Congress held in 1987 at Berlin and recommended to use the first replacement name *Courtoisia* Sojak (Brummitt, 1989). One more name *Courtoisia* H.G.L. Reichenbach, Handb. 194 (1837) was published, under the family Polemoniaceae which becomes a later homonym to both *Courtoisia* Marchand and *Courtoisia* Nees.

There are two species of this genus distributed in Tropical Africa, Madagascar and Indian subcontinent. In India only one species is occurring which goes under the name *Courtoisia cyperoides* (Roxb.) Nees since long, as evidenced in the classic works of Clarke (1893), Cooke (1908), Fischer (1931) and others. Since the publication of the name *Indocourtoisia* almost all the Indian authors accepted the combination *Indocourtoisia cyperoides* (Roxb.) Bennet & Raizada as the correct name for the Indian species and this nomenclature appears in the latest Floras. Since *Courtoisia* J. Sojak is the correct generic name according to the rules of priority, this species should be *Courtoisia cyperoides* (Roxb.) J. Sojak. The African species is *Courtoisia assimilis* (Steudel) P. Maquet.

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Originally the Indian species was described under *Kyllinga* Rottb. as *K. cyperoides* Roxb. and at times treated under the genus *Cyperus* L. *sensu lato* as *C. pseudokyllingoides* Kukenth. and under *Mariscus* Vahl as *M. cyperoides* (Roxb.) Dietrich. But there is sufficient reason to segregate the genus *Courtoisina* Sojak from the other genera mentioned above, though there are some external similarities among these. It differs from *Kyllinga* Rottb. by the annual habit, umbellate inflorescence, tristigmatic style and trigonous nut, whereas in *Kyllinga* Rottb. plants are perennials, inflorescence capitate or of a single spike, style distigmatic and nut bilaterally flattened. It can be differentiated from *Cyperus sensu stricto* by the deciduous nature of the spikelets which is also characteristic of the genus *Mariscus* Vahl. But it can be separated from *Mariscus* by the annual habit and winged keel of the glumes. In *Mariscus* most species are perennials and keel of the glumes never winged. There are anatomical differences also between these genera (Vorster, 1986).

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